

SECTION III—REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed March 2, 2004. Claims 1-17 and 29-45 are canceled, and new claims 46-61 are added. Claims 18-28 and 46-61 remain pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of all pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Allowed Claims

The Examiner indicated that claims 18-28 were allowed. None of these claims is amended herein, so they continue to be allowed.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 3, 10-13, 15, 31, 38-41 and 43 for being dependent on rejected base claims, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if amended to include the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims.

New claim 46 combines the limitations of claims 1 and 3, and thus includes the limitations of allowable claim 3, its base claim, and all intervening claims. New claims 47-50 incorporate the limitations of allowable claims 10-13 and depend on allowable base claim 46. Claims 47-50 are therefore allowable by virtue of their dependence on an allowable independent claim, as well as by virtue of the features recited therein. Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 46-50.

New claim 51 combines the limitations of claims 14 and 15, and thus includes the limitations of allowable claim 15, its base claim, and all intervening claims. New claims 52-53 depend on allowable claim 51, and are therefore allowable by virtue of their dependence on an allowable independent claim, as well as by virtue of the features recited therein. Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 51-53.

New claim 54 combines the limitations of claims 29 and 31, and thus includes the limitations of allowable claim 31, its base claim, and all intervening claims. New claims 55-58 incorporate the limitations of allowable claims 38-41 and depend on allowable base

claim 54. Claims 55-58 are therefore allowable by virtue of their dependence on an allowable independent claim, as well as by virtue of the features recited therein. Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 54-58.

New claim 59 combines the limitations of claims 44 and 45, and thus includes the limitations of allowable claim 45, its base claim, and all intervening claims. New claims 60-61 depend on allowable claim 59, and are therefore allowable by virtue of their dependence on an allowable independent claim, as well as by virtue of the features recited therein. Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 59-61.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 14, 16, 17, 29, 30, 32, 42, 44, and 45 as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) by U.S. Patent No. 6,560,741 to Gerety et al (“Gerety”). Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s rejections are rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 5-9 and 33-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of, and therefore unpatentable over, Gerety in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,770,841 to Moed et al (“Moed”). Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s rejections are rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims.

Conclusion

Given the above amendments and accompanying remarks, all claims pending in the application are in condition for allowance. If the undersigned attorney has overlooked a teaching in any of the cited references that is relevant to allowance of the claims, the Examiner is requested to specifically point out where such teaching may be found. Further, if there are any informalities or questions that can be addressed via telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at (206) 292-8600.

Charge Deposit Account

Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fee(s) that may be due in this matter, and please credit the same deposit account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4-14-04

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